

Spring Branch Academic Institute



March 25, 2019

Issue 25



SAVE THE DATES

5 th Grade Field Trip – Houston Symphony	04/17/19
Student/Staff Holiday	04/19/19
Student/Staff Holiday	04/21/19
4 th Grade Recorder Concert 8:30 am –VOE	04/25/19
5 th Grade – BizTown	04/26/19
VOE Book Fair	04/29 & 30/19
Tentative ALL SBAI Field Trip to NASA K-9	05/01/19
5 th Grade Field Trip – Health Museum	05/02/19
Parent Night – MS/HS 101 – Parent Panel and Q&A	05/02/19
STAAR Test Reading 3-8	05/14/19
STAAR Test Science 5 & 8	05/15/19
4 th Grade Wax Museum – VOE Library	5/22/19

Information Regarding Elementary Move to Thornwood

Attached at the end of this newsletter are the minutes and FAQ information regarding the elementary move to Thornwood.

SBAI Elementary Emails

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julie.sirianni@springbranchisd.com	Teacher

Upcoming Events

PLEASE NOTE – SBAI Elementary follows the Valley Oaks Elementary campus calendar for early dismissals.

4 th Grade Field Trip	03/29/19
Houston Museum of Fine Arts & Big Screen Movie @ Science Museum	
VOE Jamboree	03/30/19
Donuts with Directors	04/03/19
SFMS 8:30-9:30 am	
Parent Night – Jenna McGraw	04/04/19
Of Crime Stoppers – 5:00 pm	
VOE	
STAAR Test – Math 5 th & 8 th	04/09/19
STAAR Test – Writing 4 th & 7 th	
STAAR Test Reading 5 th & 8 th	04/10/19





CONGRATULATIONS Fifth Graders - Zoe Ju, Valerie Warren and Vincent McGuire!

Zoe and Valerie both participated in the **Abydos Dana K. Barber Student Writing Awards** in the 3-5 grades poetry category.

Zoe placed second for her poem *"Dancing Snowflakes"* and Valerie placed third for her poem *"Tangle"*. Both girls will be honored at a reception at the 33rd Annual Abydos Literacy Conference being held here in Houston on Saturday, April 13th.

Zoe and Vincent McGuire are getting their writing pieces published in the **WITS** Anthology!

Way to go writers! You did SBAI PROUD!

CONGRATULATIONS MIDDLE SCHOOLERS!

The Houston Area Regional competition for **Odyssey of the Mind** was held March 9th, and our students performed exceptionally well!

SFMS was represented by two teams. Both teams had several current and former theater students, and both teams advanced to state!

Problem #5 Team, coached by Janice Teske took 1st place.

Bridget Hoffman (6th grade theater)
Brooke McAfee (6th grade theater)
David Osorio (6th grade art)
Lucy Thomas (6th grade art)
Savera Karia (6th grade theater)

Problem #2 Team, coached by Susanna Teske took 3rd place.

Adam Teske (6th grade)
Andrew Hopkins (6th grade theater)
Emily Hopkins (7th grade)
Tyler Fargason (6th grade theater)

Please congratulate the following SFMS students for being admitted to the **SBISD District Art Show**.

The artwork will be on display at the AYAM Altharetta Yeargin Art Museum. The museum is open Monday – Friday 9am to 2pm.

Grace Gentner
Chloe Stanton
David Osorio

Fun Fact: Did you know Spring Branch has its own Art Museum? Click on the link to learn more about the museum.

<https://www.springbranchisd.com/about/ayam>

You ALL have done SBAI PROUD!

CURRICULUM UPDATE

★Please Note Subjects rotate weekly

LANGUAGE ARTS:

Dina:

2nd Period ELA 2-3

Students completed their study of "The Green Man" with a focus on inside and outside changes. They will continue to explore the concept of change demonstrated by two poems – the two versions of "Nurse's Song" by William Blake.

3rd Period ELA 6-7

Students will reflect on various readings from the class and write about the generalizations of change for each reading. They will write about the topic, "Can people use persuasion to cause change?"

4th Period ELA 1-2

Students will write letters that put ideas in a chronological or logical sequence and use appropriate conventions like the date, salutation and closing. They will also use text features such as titles, table of contents, and an index to locate specific information in text.

Wilson:

All ELA classes are working on various types of research, and the persuasive elements that impact their research. Ask your student what is the most interesting part of their research up to this point.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Craddock:

2nd Grade

The students have been interpreting time lines and creating some of their own.

3rd Grade

The students have been learning about historical figures who performed heroic deeds (like the Four Chaplains of WWII and Todd Beamer).

4th Grade

The students have been learning about the Mexican-American War and Texas's involvement in the Civil War.

5th Grade

The students have been learning about the War of 1812. The 5th Graders will be having a geography test on all 50 states and capitals on Tuesday, April 16.

Dina:

5th Period Social Studies

Students will describe ways that families meet basic human needs. Next up, students will identify ways people exchange goods and services in the home, school and community.

Minutes from SBAI Parent Meeting

DATE: Thursday, March 21, 2019

TIME: 8:30 – 9:20 a.m.

RE: Relocation of SBAI Elementary to Thornwood Elementary School

In Attendance:

Lynne Barry (SBAI Director), Jim Lefebber (SBAI Assistant Director), Jennifer Parker (SBISD Administrator), Pam Johnson (SBISD Advanced Academics Dept.), Lynnda Butorka (SBAI Administrative Assistant), 30+ parents, and 3 teachers

Lynne Barry gave the following information:

- SBAI's elementary classes will definitely be moving to Thornwood Elementary School.
- Valley Oaks Elementary School's growing student population has made this move necessary.
- SBAI's curriculum and focus on individualized acceleration will remain the same.
- SBAI testing and expectations will remain the same.
- Most of SBAI's staff will remain the same.

Set up at Thornwood:

- The campus has a main building, a gym, and a library.
- SBAI will most likely have classrooms in the library building.
- SBAI students will only need to leave the SBAI classroom area for health fitness, art, and lunch. (Music is in the library building.)
- SBAI students will have their own lunch tables, as they do this year.
- The recess schedule has not been determined yet.
- SBAI teachers and/or staff will be with SBAI students for morning drop off and at dismissal areas.
- Thornwood staff will receive training on needs and characteristics of highly gifted students.
- Thornwood staff will visit SBAI at Valley Oaks to see how SBAI operates and what its unique needs are.
- Thornwood's library does not currently have a school broadcasting system for morning announcements, but SBAI students might be able to get that up and running.
- School hours will be: 7:50 – 3:00.
- Student lunch numbers/accounts transfer over.
- Lynne Barry's phone number and Lynnda Butorka's phone number will stay the same.

Transportation:

- Will **not** be provided by SBISD.
- SBAI is considering early drop off and late pick-up options.

- Parent Amanda Davison has offered to give car pool advice to parents who live far away from Thornwood.
- There are currently no after school clubs at Thornwood. However, if there is enough SBAI interest in Chess Club, etc., we can look into starting some clubs.

Science/Technology:

- SBAI is taking all of its current technology with it to the new campus.
- SBAI will take all of its current science supplies to the new campus.

Thornwood PTA:

- There isn't a Thornwood PTA.
- The PTA at Valley Oaks gave money for field trips, performances, and teacher allowances.
- Thornwood, as a Title I school, has government money for field trips and performances.
- SBAI has set up an Amazon wish list for SBAI parents to consult if they would like to help reimburse teachers who desire to purchase supplies from companies that do not have purchase arrangements with the school district.
- This year, SBAI has started branching out and taking its own field trips. This practice will continue.

Student Uniforms:

- Information about uniforms is on the handout that was distributed at this meeting.

Safety:

- SBAI will be working to keep SBAI students in as much of a contained area as possible.
- Thornwood has a full-time nurse.

Social/Emotional Needs:

- Currently, SBAI students are able to post any questions and concerns they have about the move on a poster hanging up in the math room. Teachers have been responding to them.
- SBAI is hiring a counselor who will work 2 days a week just with SBAI to help meet social and emotional needs.
- Thornwood has a counselor and a "community in schools" support specialist.

Students Returning to Home Campuses:

- The student's math level at the home campus would be assessed by current level at SBAI.
- To accelerate in Language Arts, a student must take CBE (Credit by Exam) for all subjects and skip a grade. A score of 80% on all tests is necessary.
- There is no guarantee that students who return to their home campuses will be able to return to SBAI in the future, since openings are filled by lottery on the elementary campus (limited to 60 students) and since the middle school and high school campuses have no openings.

The Future:

- SBAI will have an open house at Thornwood as soon as the classroom locations are finalized and the April lottery for new SBAI students has been completed.
- SBAI and Thornwood are thinking about how to introduce the students to each other – maybe a special event like a picnic lunch?
- The Thornwood campus is supposed to be rebuilt in 2028.
- Since the elementary students will be so much closer to the middle school and high school students, Fridays might be used as enrichment days (with activities similar to those used for Genius Hour) that combine SBAI students from the different campuses.
- Lynne said that although she knows that there will be difficult aspects of this move, she sees this as SBAI's opportunity to grow as a school community and to establish a stronger sense of identity.

Parent Questions:

Q: When is the deadline for teachers to inform the district that they are not returning?

A: (Jennifer Parker) 45 days before the new school year starts.

Q: If students return to their home campuses, is it true that they can only advance by one level in math?

A: (Pam Johnson) No, they can advance more than one level. If an elementary student is taking middle school math, the student will take a bus from their elementary campus to the middle school campus for the math class.

Q: When is the earliest Thornwood student drop off time next year?

A: (Lynne Barry) Not sure. This year, students can be dropped off 30 minutes prior to the beginning of school.

Q: Can we set up our own PTA?

A: (Lynne Barry) Yes.

Q: Can we beautify the school (such as paint the classrooms)?

A: (Jennifer Parker) You can paint if you have district permission. There is a process to go through.

Q: Are the buildings up to code?

A: (Jennifer Parker/Pam Johnson) Yes.

Q: When will the move actually take place?

A: (Lynne Barry) Lynne will know the specifics after a meeting that she is attending soon. Teachers will pack up before the end of the school year, but items won't be shipped over until after the school year ends. Custodians do a deep cleaning in July, so the classrooms probably won't be set up until after that.

Q: What is the time frame for the design of the new Thornwood campus? When can input be given? A: (Jennifer Parker) It usually starts a year before the building is built.

Q: Is the plan that SBAI will stay at Thornwood?

A: (Lynne Barry) Yes. It is also unlikely that the middle school and high school locations will ever change, due to strict UIL rules.

Mrs. Sakkal (parent) announced that she will be taking over Mrs. Davison's (parent) role for "room mother" type duties. She will be putting together a sign up form that will list opportunities for parents and students to help with the move.

Further Questions or Concerns?

Lynne Barry will be out tomorrow with limited email access for a family medical emergency. If you would like to meet with Lynne to discuss questions or concerns, contact Lynnda Butorka.

FAQ

How will this move impact SBAI programming?

This move will NOT change SBAI curriculum, programming, goals, or expectations. Our structure and rigor will continue as it has been.

How will TWE teachers/staff be trained in the unique emotional needs of HG students?

SBAI staff will meet with Thornwood staff prior to the start of school for training. In addition, the Advanced Academic Studies department has offered to do additional training and book studies to support.

The TWE instructional leadership team has been invited to come observe SBAI classes to get a better understanding of our program. In addition, SBAI will be hiring a counselor (2 days per week) to help support both students, parents, and staff.

SBAI students will continue their education within SBAI-only classrooms except for block. Even at lunch, recess, arrival, and dismissal, SBAI students are supervised by SBAI teachers.

What changes in resources will occur?

SBAI technology, curriculum, science, and other resources will go with us to the new location. In addition, we will be taking all furniture and materials purchased with SBAI funds.

Will SBAI funding be impacted?

No. SBAI is its own school and has its own budget. In addition, any funds raised through Spring Branch Education Foundation remain with SBAI.

What if a student elects to go back to his/her home campus?

Students returning to their home campuses will be placed in the math course designated by SBAI (no Credit By Exam necessary). In elementary, SBISD only accelerates in math, unless a student skips a grade. To do this, a student must make an 80% or above on all 4 core areas. CBEs are offered by the district four times per year.

If a student elects to go to his/her home campus, and then wants to return to SBAI, acceptance will depend upon space. However, entry at the middle school or high school level is not possible at this time for any student.

What is Thornwood's address?

The physical address is 14400 Fern. The phone number to the main office is 713-251-7300. Mrs. Barry's and Mrs. Butorka's phone numbers will remain the same.

When will Thornwood be rebuilt under the 2017 Bond Program?

Thornwood's rebuild is currently slated for 2028.

What are the school hours?

Classes in 2019-20 will begin at 7:50 and end at 3:00.

What are the campus mascot and colors?

The Thornwood mascot is a tiger, and the colors are navy blue and hunter green.

What is the dress code?

Students at Thornwood are required to wear uniforms, just like Spring Forest. Navy or khaki pants, shorts, skirts or jumpers may be worn. All shorts, skirts and jumpers must approach the knee. No denim, stretch pants, or track pants may be worn. Solid colored, navy, white, red or forest green polo style shirts may be worn. All shirts should be short or long sleeved with a collar. Sweatshirts or cardigans may be worn. Hoods may not be worn during the school day.

All students in grades 2-5 must have their shirts tucked in and pants worn with a belt. Gym shoes should be worn daily.

Thornwood has Spirit Day every Friday. Students may wear their current Thornwood Tiger Spirit shirt with jeans on Fridays to show their school spirit. (If they do not have on the new Thornwood Spirit shirt, they may not wear jeans). SBAI students may also wear SBAI T-shirts.

Thornwood also has Club or College Day every Wednesday. Students may wear their TWE club shirt or College shirt with uniform pants. This includes TWE Art Club, TWE Basketball Club, TWE Field Day, TWE Writing Camp, and previous TWE spirit shirts, as well as SBAI clubs such as Lego Robotics. As this is Club day, Thornwood Elementary or SBAI must be on the shirt.

What is the classroom situation?

The Thornwood complex consists of three buildings. We have currently confirmed a group of rooms and office space in the library building. This building also contains the science lab and bathrooms.

Are the block classes the same?

Yes. Students will continue to participate in art, music, and health fitness with their Thornwood grade level peers. At Thornwood, these classes are called block, specials or fine arts (interchangeably). The Thornwood Health Fitness Department and Art teacher have a strong Twitter presence. Please take a look (@thornwood_PE and @GalenaArt)!

Does Thornwood have a nurse and counselor?

Yes, Thornwood has a full-time nurse and part-time counselor. In addition, they have a Communities in Schools Student Support Specialist. SBAI is also hiring a part-time counselor, as stated above.

Will lunch numbers stay the same/transfer? What about the lunch menu?

Yes, lunch numbers remain the same throughout your child's SBISD career. We will work with Child Nutrition Services to ensure the transfer to Thornwood is smooth. The lunch menu is the standard SBISD lunch menu.

Will transportation be provided?

No. Parents who have organized carpooling are willing to help provide insights on coordinating future carpools.

Are there options for after school care?

Because of the number of families that have expressed concern about drop off/pick up times, we are investigating options for SBAI early drop off/late pick up. More information will be forthcoming. Thornwood is currently seeking options to partner with the YMCA for after school care on campus; however, this has not been finalized. Other entities do pick up at Thornwood for after school care. The current facilities include: Kingdom Kids, America's Choice, Attitude Respect Manners (ARMs), Ashford Montessori, Kid Fit, Alphabet Club, Love and Art, and Crème de la Crème.

Are there after school clubs?

Currently no clubs are offered. SBAI can elect to add/offer after school clubs if there is interest.

Does Thornwood have a PTA?

Thornwood does not currently have an active PTA. Many community businesses and organizations partner with Thornwood to provide support for students, families and staff.

Will there be more opportunities for interaction between K-12?

Yes! This location is within walking distance of both SFMS and SHS and is on the SFMS/SHS bus route. We plan to provide more opportunities to more strongly develop the SBAI identity and community.

Will there be leadership opportunities for SBAI students?

Yes. In addition to TWE groups, SBAI students will be encouraged to start clubs and lead activities. One specific resource we hope to bring to TWE is a broadcast studio.

Can we tour Thornwood?

We will be arranging a tour before the end of the school year, after our new students have been added, so they can tour as well. Please be on the lookout for the date/time!